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금재영

**Study on the Development of Sports Industry  
in People's Republic of China: Focusing on the case of Chinese  
Basketball Association**

by

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**Abstract**

**Study on the Development of Sports Industry**  
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**Basketball Association**

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Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the sports industry has gone through major changes. 'Sports' under Mao Zedong's rule was considered merely as an activity at the national welfare level to promote nationalism by physically strengthening each and every individual. However, the perspective towards 'sports' transcended beyond an ideological and physical tool as China made a transition from a planned economy into a market economy under Deng Xiaoping. Slowly but gradually the advent of the sports industry and structural modifications of government ran administrations were made under Deng in order to compete against the world's growing sports industry. China's performance in global sporting events and investments made in the sports industry

worldwide is unparalleled with great performances and substantial investments. The outcomes may seem successful, but the underlying truth concealed under the substantial money and medals lies the truth that the sports industry is used by the state and Communist Party officials as a propaganda tool. This paper will display sports related policies and new perspectives adapted by the Communist Party in regards to the sports industry. Also, this paper will observe how the corporates, athletes, and broadcasting section have functioned in result to the new policies released by the Communist Party while China has developed new perspectives along with the world. By studying previous cases that contradict the policies new adaptive characteristics of the modern world and prove that ‘sports’ is still used as a tool to benefit State officials through the distribution of wealth process while taking control and show that the actors are all supportive towards this idea of benefitting the state and officials.

**KEYWORDS: Chinese Communist Party, Sports Industry, Mao Zedong,  
Deng Xiaoping, Planned Economy, Market economy, Investments, Athletes,  
Broadcasting, Athlete**

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논문초록

# I. Introduction

Under the doctrine of one country, two systems: Hong Kong is a special administration region of China with separate executive, legislative and independent judicial authority. The United States and other numerous countries have acknowledged this doctrine of the “one country, two systems,” within China. However, in 2019, the issue came to clash between America’s NBA (National Basketball Association) and the Chinese government. Darryl Morrey, the general manager of the Houston Rockets, an NBA basketball team, expressed his support on Twitter, “Fight for freedom, stand with Hong Kong,” for the people of Hong Kong that are opposing the Mainland Chinese Extradition Law.

In addition, Adam Silver, the president of the NBA, supported his fellow colleagues’ freedom of speech, making the situation even worse. Considering that the statements were given by two very influential figures within American society, the Chinese government was extremely frustrated and resorted to threatening to withdraw broadcasting rights, contracts, and endorsements from the NBA, insisting that the statements were a threat to the one country, two systems doctrine’s legitimacy. (Greer, 2019) NBA teams were therefore forced to seek other endorsements, as Chinese investors withdrew their sponsorships, broadcasting deals, and more. Multiple NBA stars and coaches were interviewed regarding this issue, but it was obvious that they were reluctant to give a straightforward answer

to the media, contrary to their usual candidness in America, the “land of the free”, where the freedom of speech is guaranteed under the first amendment.

The players’ and coaches’ reluctant stance came under huge criticism when exposed by the media and even Donald Trump, the US president himself, was critical of their attitude, noting how certain NBA players and coaches had never hesitated to criticize the American government. This incident clearly exhibited the Chinese financial influence over the NBA, a globally beloved league with millions of followers and fans. (Hill, 2019) The league launched NBA China ten years ago. NBA China now worth more than \$4 billion, or \$133 million in value for each team. Look at the Tencent deal. The league signed a \$700 million, 5-year deal with the Chinese Internet and tech company in 2015 for Tencent to carry NBA games and other content on its digital platforms. That deal has been so successful that the spend for the NBA will be over \$800 million. (Ozanian, 2018)

Chinese broadcasting corporates willingness to terminate NBA broadcasting games and advertisements insight into how the Chinese Communist Party will eagerly prioritize their national ideology over the supply and demand of their own consumers. The diplomatic relations between the U.S. and China seemed particularly frail, prone to aggravation over a single tweet on Twitter by American who wasn’t even a member of the U.S. government. Therefore, why offend an influential international investor when your own salary and overall revenue of the league was at stake? It is comprehensible to understand the players and coaches’

determination, but in a business perspective, it clearly is acceptable. However, it does violate the first amendment, freedom of speech. Besides the NBA, Chinese investors have made substantial investments into the international sports industry. Chinese corporates and investors have ownership of Spanish football clubs and numerous sponsorships or commercial relationships amounting to 100 million euros. (Wang et al., 2019; Tan, 2010) It is easy to find Chinese characters on players' uniforms, indicative of the prevalence of Chinese sponsorship amongst Italian and English football clubs. Additionally, the NFL (National Football League) and MLB (Major League Baseball) are desperately seeking broadcasting and sponsorships in China due to their global influence. (Brown, 2016) Within the sports industry, the influx of Chinese money is ubiquitous to higher shares in global and popular leagues. The first Chinese domestic professional sports league was launched in 1994 (Beere, 2009), but no one could have imagined the sudden burst of Chinese influence over the modern global sports industry.

Sports is an universal platform for both entertainment and business, raking in profit through the joy of its widespread consumers. Tickets, merchandise, broadcasting, sports betting, and more all act as small industries inclusive to the sports industry. Intrinsically, as an entertainment business, sports attire brands and other branching sports industries often use mass public appeal, using celebrity endorsements and other positive pop culture to instill dreams within people of all age groups. In Western society, ideas of hope, freedom, and individualistic

aspirations are subliminally embedded within sports as cultural ideals, but these same ideals are not necessarily welcomed by Chinese Communist Party. Rather, the Chinese government has encouraged strong nationalism since Mao Zedong, in which the strength of the Chinese government is prioritized over individualistic interests. Even access to information is limited to the average Chinese citizen, as the government blocks the use of Facebook and Google, thereby monopolizing the inflow of news.

On the contrary, the Chinese government post Deng Xiaoping had given the impression, through promotion of specific policies, that their sports industry was privatized for the purpose of maximizing profit through commercialization after multiple values such as production and investments were introduced to a previously planned economy that valued labor. Privatization would mean that the sports industry would be free from government intervention and operate as a private institution in order to compete against the growing sports industry around the world. However, by addressing how privatization and profit seeking is a mere concept on the surface that the Communist Party uses as a facade for others to see. In reality, the sports industry is under control and acts as a tool for wealth distribution amongst the state and government officials. Although time has passed since Mao was the Chairman of the Communist Party with his conventional perspective towards sports as more of a platform than an entertainment, it seems

that since the People's Republic of China has been established, the governments conventional perspective towards sports still remains the same.

Specifically, this paper will review sports policies and question how effectively privatization has been dissolved into multiple aspects of the sports industry such as the corporates that invest, the players and broadcasting sector. In order to contradict the focus on privatization and prove that the innovative perspective towards sports in order to compete against the world is merely a superficial fancy agenda, this paper will observe cases of the Chinese Basketball Association to prove that the Chinese Basketball Association is under surveillance and is more of a platform for the government officials to make a name for themselves.

## **II. China's sports policy development in People's Republic of China**

### **1. Development of sports industry**

Even before 1949, Communists promoted the widespread use of sports exercises amongst their citizens as a part of their political campaign. The CCP, during this period, targeted the masses and aimed to “train a fit, obedient, and disciplined workforce”. (Wei, 2010: 2380) Since the establishment of the PRC, the Communist Party began its Sovietization of the sports system, the ‘Two Chinas’ issue with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1952. This was when the Republic of China’s, current day Taiwan, team withdrew from the games on July 17, in response to the IOC's decision to allow both People’s Republic of China and Republic of China’s athletes to compete. This sparked the Two China’s conflict incident in the Olympics, which resulted in the PRC Olympic Committee’s withdrawal from the IOC in 1958. As a result, the central government realized the importance of China’s sports performance to the regime’s international prestige. (Xu, 2008)

Mao’s China copied fundamentals from the Soviet Union (노위제 勞衛制 sport policy for labor and national defense) in developing China’s sports development policy to cultivate the adaptive capacity of socialist construction

through physical training. Newly born China relied on the Soviet model to achieve new popular culture revolving around physical recreation, promoted through the addition of physical education classes within public schools. The Chinese Physical Education teacher's guidelines were copied from the Soviet guidelines that had specific physical training guidelines for students at different ages. (Hong and Lu, 2019)

In order to solidify a socialist nation with a strong central government and planned economy as its backbone, ‘거국 체육(學國體育)’체제 (Sports for the rise of country) was the state slogan regarding sports. By actively disseminating physical education under the government's planned organization and guidance, school sports, professional sports, and social sports were harnessed to become the groundwork for the development of Chinese sports from the early days of its founding. (Chang and Hwang, 2008)

Mao had a specific principle, ‘health above all’, engraved into China's early policy of physical education in schools. In one of Mao's speech, “On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People,” he stated that, “educational policy must enable everyone who receives an education to develop morally, intellectually and physically and become a worker with both socialist consciousness and culture” (Ma, 1951: 72). The goal for school sports was to stimulate the body in order to develop self-identity and spirit (intelligence, virtue and body) and to embody patriotism, responsibility and teamwork in youth. The

goal for professional sports was to build infrastructure in all local governments and for the further purpose of erasing China's international image of being the 'Sick Man of East Asia' (동아병부- 東亞病夫), originating from its historic image of widespread opium smokers. The goal for social sports was to push the slogan for Chinese citizens training their bodies in dedication to patriotic labor and nationalism. Sport policies were the basis for development in terms of improving individuals and disseminating P.E. to generate tangible effects, such as stimulating national integration and national pride through sports in socialist practice. Although, the Great Leap Forward 대약진운동(大躍進運動) and Cultural Revolution 문화대혁명(文化大革命) led to the deterioration of Chinese sports for a brief period, the premature concept of sports was maintained until the reform and opening of China. (Chang and Hwang, 2008)

Maoist sports embodied a specific ideology, combining Chinese nationalism and the ideology of Communist revolution. Unlike other Soviet or East European socialist countries, China under Mao prevented the use of competitive sports as nationalist tools to defeat capitalist or imperialist countries. The ideology of "friendship first, competition second," for example, reflected the radical 'ultra-left' and 'self-reliance' policy behind Mao's hostility to both the U.S. and the Comintern, including the Soviet Union. (Chang and Hwang, 2008: 14) Mao's thoughts on physical culture reflected his views on nationalism in that he denied the Western values on sports and wanted to adapt a new culture revolving around

boosting people's nationalism through the promotion of physical activity. However, Mao started to question the validity of the Soviet Model as a guide to Chinese development. Mao's economic focus was on heavy industry and agriculture, industrializing rural areas and implementing the use of moral incentives rather than materialistic motivation, thereby stimulating revolutionary commitment. In Mao's ideology, these collective strategies were supposed to be the tools to overtake the capitalist West. But, again with the failure of the Great Leap forward, the sports sector was curtailed during the start of the Cultural Revolution. As a result, both the CCP and Mao admitted to the errors of the Great Leap Forward and initiated a new policy of recovery and readjustment. (Chang and Hwang, 2008)

After the Great Leap Forward, sports development in the early stage of the Cultural Revolution was affected by disruption of competitive sports, the discontinuation of Chinese participation in international sporting events, shut down of athletic schools and facilities, and the condemnation of athletes and their special treatment. The new regime began giving breathing room to commercialization and globalization in the 1980's, as a way of 'after reform and opening-up'. As China opened its doors to the world under the new Chairman, Deng Xiao Ping, Mao's 거국 체육(舉國體育)'체제 (Sports for the rise of nation) gradually lost its influence due to being outdated in context of the rising trend of the rapidly growing global sports. The failure of Mao's socialism and Cultural Revolution was criticized by Deng, who argued that Mao's socialist values were rooted in the

deficiencies of the production force. Therefore, opening up the national market and promoting economic growth became core principles of the post-Mao ideology. Contrary to the Cultural Revolution era, competition was considered fair under market economic reform. (Rong, 1999).

Deng stated, “We need to change production relations and structures that are inconsistent with the development of productivity and modify inadequate management, lifestyle and ideology”. (Horne, 2009: 97) This statement became the trigger for change in all aspects of politics, economy, and culture, becoming relevant in sports as well. Along with additional changes within school systems and both professional and social sports, Deng’s era reflected change after Mao’s era, becoming the grounding soil before facing the era of globalization.

In 1979, China rejoined the IOC and established an Olympic strategy to spread socialist sports and improve professional sports during the new era, launching a series of reform policies in the sports sector. At the National Sports Project Conference held in 1979, the Party officials analyzed and evaluated the sports business from the past and established a future development direction. Based on the national policy, China would maintain its unique socialist path, while simultaneously improving training and performance. As a result, reform and opening was the turning point in quality change for Chinese sports that made it possible for sports to develop in favor of market economic development. New Chinese socialist characteristics under Deng were dissolved into such transition,

escaping from the usual norm of initiating planned, state-led agendas, and instead developing a system of its own for the sole purpose of development while pursuing its industrialization within a market economy. The most obvious change was that investing in the sports market became available to both social groups and corporates. (Tan and Houlihan, 2012)

These changes were truly a breakthrough for the Chinese society at the time. New policies regarding reforms of the sports industry may have been considered vague, unprecedented and abstract at the time, but Deng's reform and opening policies were the core foundation for the transition from planned economy to market economy, a tremendous transition for China. Mao himself never promoted high performance sports, but after his death, the primacy of ideology in sports was gradually replaced by more Western concepts of athletics. Deng emphasized 'Promoting Sport for the Nation's Pride in 「Tiyu Bao」 on 15 September, 1983. China began to pay serious attention to Olympic sports after the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games where they placed fourth, triggering a nationwide wave of patriotism and nationalism. In response, China sent a delegation headed by Wei Zhenlan, a sports industry official to learn from the Los Angeles Organizing Committee about how to profit from major sporting events such as the Olympic Games. China had reached the revelation that sports could be profitable and be used as a tool to inspire Chinese nationalism. (Horne, 2009)

The Chinese government approved two key documents in 1984 and 1986 regarding the reformation of sports. The first document was a CCP central committee dispatch, 'A notification about moving further ahead in sports development,' sent to all sports officials on 5 October, 1984. (Chang and Hwang, 2008) The dispatch affirmed a number of crucial points. First, Chinese sports had developed well in the 1980's, with the great achievement of Chinese athletes at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics proving that Chinese sports were approaching world levels of performance and had the potential to further promote national pride and self-confidence, as well as developing international support. Second, while Chinese sports may have progressed, there was still a gap between the performance of the Chinese team and of the other teams at the top tier of international sports. To reduce this gap, China envisaged promoting a truly popular sports policy that involved:(i) actively developing both rural and urban physical activities; (ii) working hard to promote people's health; (iii) training young children at school; (iv) improving training and competition systems and developing scientific training research(v) focusing on developing excellence at sporting events. (Hoberman, 1984: 227)

However, there were still problems with some of the reforms. The State Physical Culture and Sports Commission noted that: (i) Chinese levels of achievement in sport were still below those of other advanced countries; (ii) although sports development was still influenced by leftist thought, there were

weaknesses in terms of sport leadership, training, and systems of competition; (iii) sports reform was not keeping pace with economic reform; and (iv) the sports system needed greater uniformity. (Chang and Hwang, 2008) The Commission published an additional document in 1986 outlining a draft proposal for reforming the sports system, which was passed on 15 April, 1986. This draft policy contained clauses relating to: (i) improving the level of sports leadership and confirming the State Physical Culture and Sports Commission's overall role of leadership, coordination, and supervision; (ii) establishing a scientific training system; (iii) improving the system of sport competitions; (iv) enhancing and promoting Chinese traditional indigenous sports; (v) developing sports scientific research gradually; (vi) reforming the sport and physical education system; (vii) enhancing political thought on sports; (viii) improving the sports prize system; and (ix) developing flexible open policies in relation to international sports (Chang and Hwang, 2008)

Under Mao's regime, China treated and played sports as a national welfare program funded by the state, as a result of the socialist state's planning system and narrow-minded perception of the general public. All the costs of sports, for both professional or private sectors, had been funded by the state. Planned economy did not recognize the economic value of sports, thereby making it difficult to develop sports due to its absolute financial reliance on the state. However, after the PRC's reform and opening up, Deng's regime included the sports industry into the tertiary

industry while accelerating the process of establishing the sports industry by taking a different stance within the newly established market economy. (Zhao, 1993)

The reformation of the sports system during the 80's was considered a superficial reform, because Deng set a new environment for the industry with no fundamental changes in comparison to the reforms made in the economy and politics. In 1992, the National Athletic Commission made a more in-depth, broader approach based on discourses inspired by Deng's tour to the South and Jiang's views on accelerations in reformation. In 1994, the State's Council's "Samjeong" 삼정(三定) policy sought to define the positions and roles of government agencies, re-establish and organize government administrations, and worker positions and duties within administration. (Zhao, 1993) Reorganization focused on transforming the uniform management system of the Athletic Commissioners to establish a new administrative management system in accordance with the principles of separation of politics and business, and the interconnection of state and social groups. Reorganizing the administrative section of sports was significant, because reorganizing the sporting administration along other sectors meant new officials appointed were people familiar with the tasks that each administration performed. With the suitable officials, it was a matter of time that the sporting organizations developed equivalently as the Chinese society, from a planned and funded administration to an administration that sought profit. (Yu, 2017)

Along with further adjustments made in the 90's, professional football and basketball leagues were established in the early and mid 90's while broadcasting, advertisement and sales of merchandise, sales of tickets, lotteries, and stocks, and legislation settlements were settled in the mid to late 90's. Aware of its limited financial capacities and of the constraints this imposed on the development of high-level sports, China cautiously expanded investment opportunities and urged clubs to raise funds from local enterprises. Furthermore, the championship sought private sponsorship, and a sports market gradually emerged, initially confined to football but soon extending to other sports. With the successful kickoff of the football league, attracting massive crowds averaging 16,000 per game and pulling in corporate investments, the football league was able to annually generate over 23 million yuan (\$3.3million). (Bairner and Tan, 2010)

The advent of a successful football league expanded to other professional leagues of basketball, volleyball, table tennis, badminton, martial arts, tennis, and more. Such changes were reflected within the Chinese sport industry management law of Physical Industry Development Guidelines: "Socialist public service project with industrial character. Personality is defined as the economic attribute of physical education, socialism is a political attribute of physical education and public interest as a cultural attribute." In other words, the governmental support of sports had finally been acknowledged as a way for promoting nationalism and a central part of Chinese socialist culture. (Fan and Lu, 2014)

The trend towards the privatization of Chinese sports accelerated under the combined influence of structural factors, such as the sports administration's decision to reform its financing system and the advent of special circumstances, like the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the growing reputation of Chinese athletes and brands (Bardon and Black, 2008). The successful bid of the 2008 Beijing Olympics prompted the Chinese government to further pursue Chinese sports. The Hu Jintao government's sports policy objectives were to host the 2008 Olympics and Paralympic Games at a high standard and to further accelerate the development of the Chinese sports business, therefore satisfying the widespread demand for sports and culture. (闫 焱, 2011) Such policies were to promote the harmonious development of socialist material civilization and mental civilization. The trend towards the privatization of Chinese sports was accelerating more rapidly than before, as the Beijing Olympics was a successful international event that allowed for the world to recognize the Chinese market as an invaluable investment opportunity.

## **2. Sports Industry Policies**

**Figures 1: Sport policy initiated by administrations (mid 80s~2010)**

Policy	Date	Institution	Policy content	Goals and influence
Reforming of the sports industry	1986.05	National Athletic Committee	Reforming training, matches, infrastructure, institution and committees	Resolve and improve deprived level projects, lack of reserve capacity, lack of scientific and athletic training and lack of oversight of sports department

Policy	Date	Institution	Policy content	Goals and influence
Fostering the sports market and accelerating the process	1993.05	National Athletic Committee	Accelerate the process of sports industrialization. Set foundation for the industrialization of sports to perform under market economy	Clarify that sports is a tertiary industry and build environment for a vibrant self-development system for the improvement of the sports competition business

In the mid 80's the main focus was to change the concept of the sports industry from a national welfare level to a business. Therefore, preparations were focused on developing and reforming infrastructure such as training systems and stadiums. By improving infrastructure, the Committee believed that such actions could set foundations for the commercialization of the sports industry. The 90's was also a time period for preparation. Still, the sports industry was immature and required more financial support to settle as a tertiary industry. The products and equipment's of the sports industry was still public property. Provinces have

promoted policy regulations related to the sports economy as a response to the National Athletic Committee. The launch of the professional sports industry marked the fact that the sports industry policy had gradually become an independent policy form.

Policy	Date	Institution	Policy content	Goals and influence
Deepening sports industry reform	1993.06	National Athletic Committee	Establish an association system with Chinese characteristics. Reform the competition system and implement classification management. Expand interactions between other countries regarding sports while opening up doors	Further observe system and operating mechanisms to solve other issues, strengthen sports reforms and drive the sports business to a new level

Policy	Date	Institution	Policy content	Goals and influence
Management and development of sports clubs	1999.06	National Sports Bureau	Strengthen research and theoretical research, and gather experience to apply to sports market	Strengthen the construction of sports legislation for further advantages

Policy	Date	Institution	Policy content	Goals and influence
Sports development and reform 2001~2010	2000.12	State Council	Stay competitive and active internationally, while accelerating further reform and promoting sports for all the people. Develop sports science, strengthen leadership and expand guarantees and welfare for athletes	Sports modernization through socialization, scientificization, industrialization and legislation of sports industry

Policy	Date	Institution	Policy content	Goals and influence
29 <sup>th</sup> Olympic Tax collection Finance Issue	2003.08	Department of State Taxation Bureau	Implement a tax benefit for the 29 <sup>th</sup> Olympic Organizing Committee, International Olympic Committee and Olympic participants	Beijing Olympics provide support for fiscal and tax policy

Policy	Date	Institution	Policy content	Goals and influence
About the opinions of accelerating the sports industry	2010.03	State Council Office	Develop Sports competition and market. Actively foster brokerage market. Create a large market for sporting goods and promote international trade through sporting service	Succeeded in strengthening loans and investments. Supporting conditional sports firms to join capital market loans for further expansion. Encourage private and foreign capital to invest in sports industry and created jobs through process

(위연균, 2017)

China's new focus was to host the Olympics and therefore the sports industry had to compete against the world. Most policies enacted by the sports industry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century provided support for the success of the 2008 Olympics. Sports was more exposed to the public as a form of entertainment and self-conditioning for the purpose to stimulate consumption. Also, tax was collected to support the Beijing Olympics and the Committees responsible for the hosting and athletes were treated with better welfare to perform in the Olympics.

The 80's and half of the 90's could be best described as the preparation stage and the remaining 90's and 21<sup>st</sup> century could be described as exploring and experimenting stages. The perspective towards sports at the level of national

welfare had to change and develop into a market perspective. Therefore, professional leagues were introduced and systematic modifications were constantly tested for the improvement of the sports industry to compete globally. China successfully hosted the Beijing Olympics and the sports industry had adapted to a new stage of a competitive commercialized market.

The United States of America utilizes sports as a symbol of freedom with the purpose of commercialization and national profit. (Kennedy et al., 2009)

Fitness attire commercials promote renowned athletes through the media using slogans such as Nike's "Just Do It" and Adidas "Impossible is nothing". Athletes from various sports leagues are idolized by the public and in social media, often appearing in brand sponsorships and commercials for a substantial fortune. The market decides the value of athletes and consumers decide the market. Therefore, an athlete's monetary value is determined through his or her ability to gather a crowd, and whether the crowd is willing to pay for tickets, streaming platforms, jerseys, and more. The league, broadcasting platforms, partner companies and sponsors earn money through the attention they elicit. Most corporations and associations that are privately owned compete and earn a fortune within the free market and regulations. In a free market, athletes are able to exploit multiple platforms, such as broadcasting, league, advertisements and attire brands, to earn a fortune, which in turn send revenue to the corporations and leagues that they belong under.

Although ‘socialist’ mindsets and other Chinese characteristics are embedded and constantly emphasized within the Chinese sports industry, the industry does seem to have an abstract ideology with no specific definition for its ‘socialist’ path. There are no specific policies nor stated goals that mention any necessary mandates for the production and distribution of the Chinese sports industry. Ironically, China’s two biggest sports attire firms, Anta and Lining, two of the biggest Chinese sport apparel corporates possess the slogans, ‘forge yourself’ and ‘Anything is possible’. These slogans, which raise the eyebrows of Communist party officials, are reflective of American sport attire brands that boast similar slogans that promote individualism and self-empowerment. These seemingly liberal slogans and sports industry privatization feel nearly out of place within the context of the Chinese social system. Though commercialization and profit-driven corporations are familiar for the Chinese, the Chinese possess a free but monitored economy that typically has a heavy controlling hand over how Chinese industries present themselves.

As previously mentioned by leaders and policies, sports were separated from politics and placed into the tertiary industry under Deng, before being the government made multiple administration adjustments to encourage profit maximization and streamline business purposes. The questions can be raised: Are the Chinese orchestrating the sports industry to take after the American sports industry? Is the harmonious development of socialist material civilization and

mental civilization within the sports industry a specific and tangible goal? Also, is this merely a superficial goal underlying the intent to maximize profit? Certain questions may not be clearly answered in their documents and policies, but observing the actors of the sports industry will allow us to evaluate whether the actors are heading in the same direction proposed by the Sports Committee. By evaluating the actors of the sports industry such as the Corporates, Athletes and broadcasting, the argument that the sports industry is still being used as a platform for the government official's wealth and control can be either compelling or gibberish.

# **III. Analysis of Sports Industry in People's Republic of China**

By reviewing the development of sports industry related policies, the agenda clearly is that the Chinese Sports Committee is eager to possess a competitive and profitable sports market by privatizing the market. Policies clearly express the new innovative perspective towards the athletes and sports related administrations. The sports industry can be an independent sector, but it requires investments, athletes to perform and attract the public and media and requires a broadcasting platform that exposes domestic and international sporting events to the public through the media. By observing the actors such as corporates, athletes and broadcasting sector, it can be proven on whether how these policies are affecting each sector and consider whether that the policies are stimulating each sectors development or not.

## **1. Corporates**

A better public image and advertisement are not the only incentives for Chinese enterprises to invest money in sports. In fact, sponsorships often have close ties to political authorities and are enticed by the offer of greater political influence. Nathalie Bastianelli, the director of Havas Sport in China, stated that,

“Sponsorship in China is an opportunity for brand names to get closer to the authorities and to engage in lobbying.” (Bardon and Black, 2018: 45) Furthermore, investors began tapping into the soccer market upon realizing how their investments may be correlated to greater political influence: “Owing to China’s political system, China’s private sector is more sensitive to the CCP’s gestures than most other corporate players in the world. Upon the message of the state’s resolution to develop soccer, Chinese investors acutely sensed the opportunity and began massive investments in the soccer markets in both China and abroad” (Yu, 2018: 63-64)

State-owned companies often do not have a choice and are obliged to partake in investments as well. Sinopec, a gas and oil company, is said to sponsor multiple sports events but shows no intentions of exploiting them. Also, the construction of multipurpose gymnasiums for sporting events were forced upon many companies. For example, huge amounts of infrastructure were built in Nanjing in 2005, totaling a staggering cost of \$285 million, but it remains deserted in the suburbs of the city. Such cases are often seen after the end of sporting events and these buildings built for the events are rarely utilized afterwards. It is clear that investment decisions are not based on economic rationales, but rather, political administrations have the authority to impose such burdens on companies. In 2008, state funds were insufficient to fund the Beijing Olympics, and private investments were thus welcomed by the government The Beijing Organizing Committee

(BOCOG) seduced international sponsors by advertising the Olympics as an opportunity to freely exploit an international market of 1.3 billion consumers. The committee guaranteed that each sector of sports activity would be granted a single sponsor, thereby granting the sponsor full commercial monopoly over the sector, with the only exception being three competing brands of beer allowed to feature. As competition was tight for sponsoring the Olympics, sponsors tied to the BOCOG within Chinese territory had to invest more than the sponsors of IOC in order to ensure their status. The Chinese government also planned to organize cultural activities so that they were open to all sponsors, including the activities that were not directly related to the Olympic event itself. The Beijing Olympics was truly a demonstration of the Chinese inventing their own unparalleled, distinct way of creating marketing regulations.

In *Document 46* a document published by China's State Council regarding the sports industry, explicitly encouraged professional leagues, and called for improvements on professional sports clubs, enterprise structure, transformation of professional leagues' decision-making processes, and maximizes the leadership of the clubs within the market **(People's Republic of China, State Council 2014.)** There is no doubt that the central government is what allowed for such market reforms and determined which sector would be granted privileges.

While private firms were able to engage in the media and marketing fields of Chinese sports, the state has been controlling the professional leagues since the

1990's. Although, society has accepted to change and adapt market reforms in the past thirty years, the sports institutions have not yet reached market reforms as the economy. Still, young Chinese elite basketball players are associated with the provincial sport bureaus, which provide funding for their early youth of development and post-retirement career. The Chinese Basketball Association league is still being considered public property of the state. Ultimately, the CBA leagues existence is not for benefit for athletes or consumers but for the purpose to prepare Chinese players for international competitions and medals and to subsidize women's basketball and youth development, that are comparatively less profitable but as equally politically important as the men's league. (Fan and Lu, 2013)

## **2. Athletes**

Along with the structural change of the administration and federation, the major key for further development of the sports market was the entrance of Chinese star athletes onto the international stage. Yao Ming for basketball, Liu Xiang for hurdles, and Tian liang for swimming, are examples of star athletes who are considered heroes in China. The emerging stars allowed China to enter the international stage and attract sponsorship. The profit generated through this process allowed both the federation and administration to finance new infrastructures and recruit and better training staff. The concept of "star player" was very new to China and was exemplified through Shanghai basketballer prodigy,

Yao Ming. Despite being a prodigy and local star, while playing in China, he was never offered a single advertising contract. Because the concept of a “star player” was new during that time, investors of commercials preferred using actors and celebrities to promote their products. Therefore, as the Chinese market did not see athletes as potential marketing assets, the incorporation of athletes into nationwide commercial sponsorships was unprecedented.

When Yao Ming was drafted into the 2002 NBA team, the seven feet, six-inch giant was immediately called the “Yao Ming Phenomenon” in China and called “the start of the Ming Dynasty” in American media (Pomfret, 2016: 582). Despite his initial struggles due to language barriers and superior competition, Ming quickly adjusted to his new environment and became a notable star player in the league. His arrival in the NBA was the moment in which Chinese sponsors and officials realized a star player's true marketing and advertising value. Thus, Ming, someone who had never been offered an advertisement deal, rapidly became the representative of numerous international brands, such as Apple, Visa International, Nike, Sorrent Inc, China United Telecom and McDonalds. While the profit Yao Ming generated remains confidential information, it is estimated that the sum of all his sponsorships add up to more than \$6 million dollars during the early stages of his NBA (Bardon and Black, 2008: 43).

In April 2002, the president of the CBA (Chinese Basketball Association) announced new regulations regarding the distribution of athlete profit. Chinese

players who play abroad pay thirty percent of their earnings to the CBA, ten percent to the local government, and ten percent to the general sports administration. (Brook, 2005) Every athlete is required to abide by these strict regulations and the exact numbers are kept confidential. Additionally, Chinese authorities demanded that Yao Ming make a “loyalty pledge” to not harm the dignity of China and to promise to continue playing for the Chinese national team. Ultimately, this requirement led to a series of tragic injuries that would shorten his basketball career. Tian Liang, a former Chinese national representative diver, revealed the limitations that the Chinese sports market face that could be potential threats to the further development of the sports industry. He stated, “The sports industry is in transition. Structural reforms have been launched, but have not followed the logic of privatisation to the end” (Bardon and Black, 2008: 44). His opinion revealed how renowned athletes within the Chinese sports industry could all clearly see how the officials and administrations were incompetent and insufficiently trained to develop the immature sector.

The status of athletes best explains the immature sector of the Chinese sports market. Athletes are considered assets of the government and lacked agents to represent them negotiating contracts. In fact, the term “agent” was altogether new and awkward to most people of the federation. “The federation officials are the one that perform the task and are apparently attached to their prerogatives,” Tian Liang emphasized.” (Bardon and Black, 2008: 44) He then stated that he

needed permission from the swimming federation to hire an individual agent. Agents in the sports industry represent athletes and act as mediators between the athletes and the team or organization in order to ensure that the athletes are awarded the economic value they deserve when negotiating a contract. This lack of knowledge of the administration is best displayed in their act of prohibiting agents. The resulting consequence is that the athlete's financial advantages are left null and unexplored, thereby straying from the concept of privatization and commercialization.

Also, Liu Xiang emphasized that, while the federation desires to monopolize the athletes' profits and monetize their performance, they are not trained nor educated regarding the tasks that officials need to perform in the sports federation" (Bardon and Black, 2008: 44). Also, Liu Xiang was forcibly asked to advertise for Baisha, a Chinese brand of cigarettes, an amateur business proposal on the part of the federation that could have compromised Xiang's public image as an athlete. The campaign was pushed forward by the federation despite Liu Xiang's family's opposition but was fortunately terminated by the Ministry of Industry. However, despite the inefficiency of government, athletes seemed to abide by their regulations, with Liu Xiang stating that, "I've done ads for Nike and Coca Cola, and some of the money was paid to my federation and to the sports administration. That's only natural, because the State invested in me for years. Thanks to the

money, they can develop other things” (Bardon and Black, 2008: 44, Liu, Xiang personal interview)

In 2000, a survey was conducted for the sports bureau administrators. Results revealed that the majority of administrators had no idea what was the purpose of having agents for athletes and could not comprehend the concept of organizing a commercial sporting event. (Bardon and Black, 2008: 44) To them, any non-professional sporting event meant that the federation would lack interest in supporting it. Pierre Justo, the director of TNS Sport, a sport and media research center, stated that sports officials in China lacked the economic training needed to further develop the sports market. (Bardon and Black, 2008: 44) In other words, sports in China has become a primarily political industry, led by people who do not understand the sports business.

### **3. Broadcasting**

The conflict between the NBA and China has resulted in China’s state-run television network, China Central Television’s (CCTV), canceling of preseason games until the suspension of the season due to the Coronavirus. (Barrabi, 2020) The Chinese demanded Morey to be fired, but Adam Silver immediately rejected the offer. Tencent, a Chinese tech company took over as the internet streamer, but maintained strict restrictions, streaming only a number of games, and limiting the choices of the consumers. With CCTV being the only TV broadcaster of the NBA,

consumers had very limited options in comparison to the high level of demand. Along with the change of China's economy, the broadcasting and film sector was also going through significant changes. (Kludt, 2020) In the early 2000's, Jiang Zemin, the leader of the Chinese Communist Party, demanded that the industrialization of broadcasting required further development. Therefore, media industrialization was publicly endorsed and encouraged thoroughly by the Communist Party. At a National Broadcasting and Film Working Conference in January 2003, regulators proposed to separate the institutional (state interests) aspect of the media industry from its enterprise (commercial interest) (Zhu, 2012). In late 2003, the party issued its "Opinions on Experimental Works of the Cultural System's Institutional Reform," a document establishing a regulatory distinction between cultural production serving the "public good" and cultural production for commercial interest. In the broadcast sector, separate market-oriented and public service systems were established. TV and radio stations were directed to take profit-seeking units and spin them off into separate companies, managed primarily according to market imperatives. Seeking profit through broadcasting was strongly encouraged through documents announced by the Chinese Communist, but despite such encouragements, CCTV's dominance contradicts such pursuit of profit and instead allows the state-owned broadcasting company to take full advantage (Zhu, 2012).

This tight control of the CCTV (China Central Television) over its consumers best exemplifies its monopolization of the sports market. CCTV is a dominant state-owned television network of more than 50 with more than more than a billion viewers. CCTV5, formerly known as CCTV-HD, was launched in order to broadcast sporting events in HD resolution. It was initially tested in Beijing on the first day of 2008 and started its service on June 30th, 2008. It was created specifically for the 2008 Summer Olympics and 2008 Summer Paralympics, and now provides a widespread number of programs, from domestic sporting leagues to foreign leagues and international sporting competitions. CCTV5 is the only prominent sports channel with national coverage for its programs, and has full dominance over local sports channels. Officials with the authority to approve international events allow broadcasting in China to reach a massive audience. Sponsors are in a good position because the massive demand generates high ratings. “This means the Chinese stations don’t pay much for the rights, because the advertisers are prepared to supply programs for nothing” (Bardon and Black, 2008: 45). As a result, CCTV5 has an advantage when it comes to negotiating broadcasts of matches and gives them the leverage of paying low broadcasting rights. TV rights are the primary source of income for all clubs in the western sports industry. Usually, broadcasting companies compete to acquire rights through bidding or by paying a fixed price for the broadcasting rights. However, Chinese broadcasting stations do not pay reasonable prices for the broadcasting rights, because of the

monopolized market. For example, between 1999 and 2001, CCTV contributed to only 2 percent of club revenues at the national championship level. (Bardon and Black, 2008: 45) Also, “CCTV pays for the rights for the basketball league, but the sums are very small. For matches with the national team, if Yao Ming is not playing, we sometimes have to pay CCTV up to 200,000 RMB for them to broadcast the match” (Bardon and Black, 2008: 45). In order to make up for the loss, marketing companies struggled to keep up with communication technologies, such as internet streaming and mobile phone networks, especially when the increasing number of users began generating more traffic online. In order to combat this CCTV-caused lack of funds, these companies had to quickly adapt to the financially unstable circumstances. Furthermore, even Chinese investors are affected by CCTV’s monopolization. The sponsorships of sporting events are more conducive for long-term profits, but local enterprises expect quicker returns and are thus continuously disappointed by their investments. Local football leagues are especially difficult to reap a long-term return in investments, therefore forcing Chinese enterprises to expand their investment opportunities to include foreign sport clubs.

In 2002, this case worked, allowing Kiejan, a mobile phone company, to sign with English premier football club, Everton, for \$3.2 million over a period of two years. Sports lotteries provided a larger audience, entertaining original fans who were happy to see Chinese characteristics (sponsorship) displayed on the

uniforms of Everton players, amassing to a total of over 20 million fans. As a result, Kejian raised its sales to rise to the spot of number 2 in China amongst 26 other mobile phone brands. (Bardon and Black, 2008: 45) This case could have possibly been the trigger for domestic companies stepping away from investment opportunities for domestic sporting leagues. The already premature Chinese sports system decided to back foreign teams over domestic sporting leagues due to the better profit returns.

## **IV. Case Study**

By reviewing the three sectors that are crucial within the sports industry, it is clear that there is a dissonance between the policies and each sector. Under the goal of development and privatization, the corporates are forced to invest, athletes are not independent from the yet immature sports administration and broadcasting sector is a monopoly that eliminates competition and negotiations. In order to further analyze the sports market, case studies of the Chinese Basketball Association and Yao Ming will present specific cases that privatization is just a superficial agenda and that profit is not equally distributed in a commercialized market. The following two cases will prove that the sports administrations officials are more focused in pleasing the investors and higher Party members than reaching higher revenues. Privatization of the sports industry is yet to be achieved and seeking benefit is not by active marketing or improving game qualities, but by exploiting a star player's value, which led to Yao's early retirement.

### **1. Case of Chinese Basketball Association (CBA)**

The conflict between the private sector and state bureaucracy began to rise in the late 90's, alongside the professional basketball market. In the case of China's professional basketball market, the direct regulators are the MCB (Management Center of Basketball), which is a department of the GAS (General Administration

of Sports), and MCB's puppet "non-governmental" organization – the Chinese Basketball Association (federation). While the majority of the professional basketball teams are linked with local sport bureaus, which are both branches of the GAS and provincial or municipal governments. Therefore, the leadership imbalance and parallel structure, mid-level bureaucrats often find their goals contradictory from within their own branch. For the purpose of owing to the communist legacy, Chinese sports officials are obligated to both glorify the region with satisfying sports performances, and, sometimes, enhance the economic growth of the region under their jurisdiction. However, these two sets of goals are inherently self-contradictory. While the economic development objectives welcome market-driven growth, the political agendas discourage large-scale deregulation. In fact, sports bureaucrats more often opt to pursue the latter, considering the lower risk of preserving the status quo than of introducing changes. Xin Lancheng, the director of the MCB, the conservative bureaucrat that has been consistently blocking proposals to reform the basketball market, fought against such attempts of the league's privatization, in order to save his career. (Fu, 2017)

But, private actors, such as wealthy individuals and corporate executives, perceived business potential in professional basketball, and have long desired for the privatization of the league, especially since the CBA transitioned from an inter-provincial basketball competition to a "professional" basketball league in 1995. However, Xin Lancheng declined the initiation of the PBLOC (Professional

Basketball League Organizing Committee), which was a bottom-up revolution to privatize the CBA league, proposed by seven basketball clubs. Xin gave prior admonition to other clubs for not joining the organization and tenaciously fought against the proposal. But, with ongoing political pressure and criticism that may endanger their career, PBLOC was eventually disbanded. (Fu, 2017).

Yao Ming also fought for the privatization of the operation of leagues by summoning eighteen of the twenty CBA teams to fight against the MCB. Eighteen clubs formed a union and founded the *Zhongzhilian* 中职联 (Chinese Professional Basketball Association) in 2016. In response, the basketball federation initiated its own federation-led CBA Company, and Yao publicly accused the MCB for “sustaining the old system under a new name” (Tang et al., 2016: 29).

The bureaucrats of the MCB desired to retain the authority to distribute the resources, because they are worried about private firms focusing their investments towards the more profitable teams, such as prioritizing the men’s team over the women’s team or youth team. Also, the winning of medals is more favored than creating market growth, because of the model success of exemplary figures, such as Cai Zhenhua, the Head Coach of the National Table Tennis Team who won all the gold medals in the 2000 Sydney Olympics and was thereby rapidly promoted to the deputy head of the GAS. On the other hand, directors of the Management Center of Football (MCF), who have promoted privatization and improved profit over the past twenty years, ended up in jail for corruption and suffered criticism

from the Chinese public, due to the national team's poor performance. Progress in the Olympics or improved results are therefore the priority and main factor of the officials' evaluation. By 2016, local governments only had shares in four of the twenty clubs - Liaoning, Bayi (army), Zhejiang and Jiangsu. The other sixteen teams were either privately owned or had mixed ownership with the participation of local state-owned enterprises (Fu, 2016). Teams are not yet capable of generating profit on their own and thus rely on local government funding, therefore leading the local governments to view the teams as their own assets.

As the private sector and bureaucrats have different goals and objectives, the private sector and the state bureaucracy have maintained a power struggle for an extended period of time. Recently, the ruling elites have become determined to break this balance, oddly in favor of the private sector. In January 2017, the new head of the GAS Gou Zhongwen supported Yao Ming to privatize the CBA, to become the president of the CBA and to force the federation to release business operations. The state's decision to favor Yao Ming indicated the states favoring the privatizing forces over the ever-loyal conservative bureaucrats. Such decisions by the state could best be explained by Yao's deep connections with political leaders during the time he was an NBA star, having been the face of China for a period of time and having previously represented the sports sector in the 12th National Committee of the Chinese People's Consultative Conference (People's Republic of China People's, Political Consultative Conference, 2011)

Simultaneously, the state and elites had recognized the significance of gaining support outside the political realm. The business empires built by businessmen, such as Wang Jianlin, Ma Yun and Yao Ming, were becoming more and more influential to the public due to their success. The state recognized that these business sectors possessed tremendous power that could be a major threat if used against the regime. As a result, cooperating with these private sector leaders to a certain extent was essential for the state to maintain political stability within the country. By compromising with Yao and the other club owners' requests, the central state risked losing the loyalty of mid-level bureaucrats, but would ultimately benefit from winning the support of the now more crucial, private sector (Yu, 2018: 44)

## **2. Case of Yao Ming**

Extending from the extra fees and charges that Yao Ming pays to the CBA, which was regulated after Yao Ming's departure for the NBA, the attitude that the Chinese sports officials have towards Yao Ming could be best described as puzzling. It was either to allow their 'product' of their own to compete and challenge in a bigger and more influential market or fearing to lose control over the player himself and losing a key factor of profit for the domestic market. China has long been wary of foreign relations and authorities to lay ground in their home because of the fear of the foreign power conquering the market and people.

Although China has gone through major changes, the suspicion still remains towards the NBA because the CBA looks at the NBA as an imperialistic power that will take the best Chinese players for little in return.

Chinese sports officials in the public realm show their respect and embrace the NBA. They desire to learn from one of the world's most influential and high profiting league to apply to their own domestic league in order to complete an "NBA with Chinese characteristics" (Larmer, 2005: 9). Recently, the CBA has implemented more games and actively seeking sponsors. However, the concealed true fear of the sports officials is the NBA's individualistic values and hip-hop culture while losing its crowd, especially the young generation to the NBA. Obviously, Yao was a star as soon as he arrived in the NBA with multiple sponsors and a sufficient contract. It did not take much time for Yao to adapt to the new league, but an incident happened in a game in an international game in Athens 2004 Olympics. Against Spain, China and Yao were performing poorly and after a timeout, Yao Ming was not shy of showing his emotions as he yelled at his teammates with infuriated actions because of his teammates lack of discipline and effort. In the post- game conference, he even foreshadowed retiring from the national team. Yao Ming's expression of emotions was a surprise to everyone even to the Americans. But, contrasting views on Yao's actions immediately took place. American coaches saw his assertiveness and toughness that NBA coaches wanted to cultivate within him. But, the Chinese officials and public criticized his

abnormal behavior by issuing a statement. Based on Yao's behaviors on the court, Chinese officials blamed the corrupting influences of American culture, stating that they would be hesitant in sending Chinese prodigies to the NBA where they adapt disrespectful behaviors. Also, a CBA official stated that Yao was an "obedient child" with a "good reputation" and that he has changed to dare to say anything. (Larmer, 2005: 64) During that summer, Yao's struggle along with the state started because the CBA wanted to take advantage of the newly born celebrity. The CBA travelled with Yao and the men's basketball team all around China with a demanding schedule where they had to play nine games in nine provincial cities. Along with the insignificant games, him and the team travelled around to please the sponsors stating that he was an elephant in a circus. It was not just games and travelling, but incessant banquets and taking photos with businessmen, media and fans. During the last provincial game, the bus took a detour to head into a building where sponsors were located, but Yao Ming refused to listen to orders. He was the first to resist against power and even demand a number of conditions regarding his schedule, definitely an incident that was unprecedented of Chinese athletes. (Larmer, 2005)

After the outburst of emotions of Yao Ming, the CBA chief Li Yuanwei called Yao for a private meeting. It cannot be known whether Yao's withdrawal from retiring from the national team was to comfort Li or from realizing the threat that his commercial success can be endangered if relations with Beijing is

exacerbated, Li made sure to inform the government knew that nothing was wrong about Yao's status. Yao was definitely in a tough situation, being the tall star from a comparatively closed, under surveillance and nationalistic nation trying to adjust to an open, competitive and flashy market. But, along with the loyalty pledge and extra commission he paid the CBA, it was clear that Yao always had to listen to someone to please a group that pays someone money. (Larmer, 2005)

## V. Conclusion

The sports industry has experienced major changes since Mao. Mao adhered to the more conventional Soviet model where sports was considered a tool for promoting national pride. Since Mao, the sports market has changed along with the drastically changing Chinese society. Deng criticized Mao's socialist values that it was rooted in the deficiencies of the production force and allowed to escape from the usual norm of initiating planned, state-led agendas, and instead developed a system of its own for the sole purpose of development while pursuing its industrialization within a market economy.

Under the influence of Deng's new agenda, Sports Committees followed the global trend by adjusting the structure of federations, encouraging investments, commercializing the league, training star players and Privatizing the sporting leagues to seek profit. Policies were initiated and China's performance on the international level improved and Chinese corporates investments in sports reached several major sporting leagues. However, despite all major changes several questions can be raised: is China's sports industry privatized? Is the sole purpose profit seeking? Does the sports committee possess the equivalent agenda to the policies? Privatization occurs when there is no interference of the public sector. Yao Ming's case shows that him and the national team was nowhere close to free from interference, but was treated more like circus monkey. The Sports officials do not possess the adequate knowledge to operate a profit seeking industry and are

worried about pleasing the higher officials. Therefore, the Chinese sports industry, especially the CBA has failed to privatize the league. CCTV's dominance disallows the teams to earn a profit because there is no competition in gaining broadcasting rights. Eventually, this harms the leagues and team's revenue and players' salaries. The flow of money is not decided by negotiations and consent of financial transaction between two or more sectors. Therefore, it fails to be a commercialized industry nor able to seek profit. In result, the disharmony between the policies and reality is manifest and China has yet to privatize its sports industry.

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## 논문초록

개혁·개방 이후 중국 스포츠 산업의 발전에 관한 연구:

중국 농구 협회 사례를 중심으로

금재영

국제학과 국제지역학전공

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개혁·개방 이후 중국의 급변하는 사회에서 등소평은 중국 전체를 탈바꿈한다. 스포츠 산업도 3차 산업으로 분류하고 ‘생산’이라는 개념과 ‘이익’이라는 개념이 정착이 된다. 급성장하는 세계의 스포츠 산업에 맞게 중국도 스포츠 산업의 행정 및 선수들의 개혁을 오랜 기간 동안 강조하며 진행하지만, 투자를 책임지는 회사, 스포츠 산업 소속의 운동선수 및 방송국을 들여다보면 강조된 사항과 맞지않는 태도와 행정을 이어가고 있다. 스포츠 산업, 특히 유명 선수를 배출해낸 중국의 농구 리그 (CBA)의 케이스를 보면 스포츠 산업 공무원들은 본인의 출세와 중앙정부의 눈치를 보느라 정신이 팔려있는 현실을 볼 수 있다. 중국식 사회주의라는 이념은 오랜 기간 당의 선전을 위해 이용되었지만 중국의 스포츠, 특히 농구 리그는 정부와 공무원들을 위한 서커스

집단으로 밖에 안 여겨지는 현실로 중국 정부가 발표하는 스포츠 관련 정책들과 당 회의에서 나오는 발표들이 현실과 얼마나 거리감이 있는지 분석한다.

주제어: 중국 공산당, 스포츠 산업, 마오쩌둥, 덩소평, 계획경제, 시장경제, 투자, 운동선수, 방송국

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